



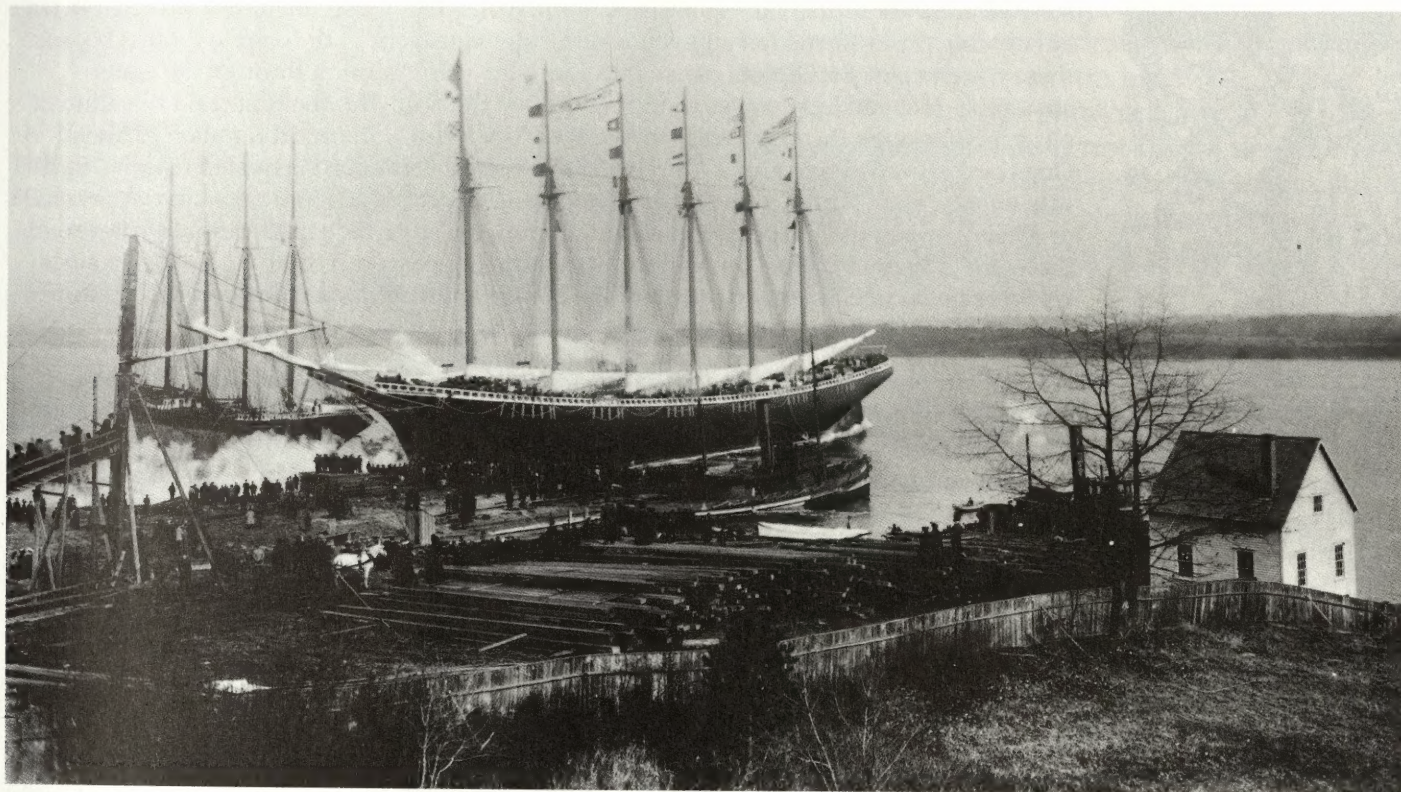
The Rhumb Line

Maine Maritime Museum

June 2002

Celebrating Our 40th Anniversary 1962-2002

Number 30



Months of building culminate in the moment of launch, as the schooner Edward B. Winslow slides into the Kennebec from Percy & Small's north ways. More than a thousand people witnessed this launch on November 24, 1908.

Refitting the Percy & Small Shipyard

Anne Witty, Curator

You can't make an omelette without breaking eggs, as the well-worn saying goes. So as the weather warmed this spring, we undertook to dismantle the Percy & Small shipyard exhibits that have served the Museum's visitors well

for many years – since the late 1970s, in fact – in preparation for installing new ones.

Clearing out the old, making way for the new is exciting and melancholy all at once. The exhibits in the original shipyard buildings – the Mould Loft, Paint & Treenail Shop, Mill, Joiner

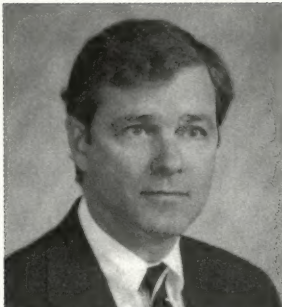
continued on page 3

**We're Launching Our New Exhibitions –
Percy & Small Shipyard ~ McEvoy Gallery**

Join Us for Ribbon Cutting & Refreshments!

July 5th 5:00 – 7:00 p.m.

Our Mission is to collect, preserve and interpret materials relating to the maritime history of Maine and to promote an understanding and appreciation thereof.



From the Chart Table

I remember back when I was a lad on active duty in the Navy, arriving in my ship's darkened pilothouse for an evening's underway watch. The first thing I always looked for was the position of the engine order telegraph handles. I wanted to know how fast we were going. From a navigation point of view, speed is a fairly critical piece of data - as is the course. Speed through the water is also a factor in how easily the helmsman can steer an accurate course during his trick at the helm. Obviously there was no reliable way of knowing this information anywhere below decks (except in the engine rooms) because there weren't any port lights. You could sense the ship's motion through the water - sometimes feel and hear waves thudding against the hull. But the first real indication of our speed through the night was the so-called "lee helm." In round numbers, "Ahead One-third" equaled five knots; "Two-thirds" was ten; "Standard" equaled fifteen; "Full" was twenty; and "Flank" was twenty-five plus. On our old 1943-vintage heavy cruiser, 32 or 33 knots was possible but not pleasant if you were anywhere in the after third or so of the vessel. I know because we made a "speed run" once from Yorktown to Boston since we were going to completely overhaul the boilers and engines anyway. Fuel consumption wasn't such a big consideration back in the mid-1960s.

As a grown person, I now have a small model engine order telegraph on my desk that used to be my father's. The little handles can be moved forward and back with accompanying bell jingles. It bears the merchant demarcations on its faces (in addition to "Stop" and "Finished with Engines") of "Slow," "Half" and "Full." When I first installed it on my desktop, I didn't pay much attention to the position in which I left the handles. "Stop" seemed about right since it was straight up and down and, thus, orderly. But then, employing light symbolism, I started experimenting with various forward speeds, equating this little toy with work life at the Museum. "Full" started to seem the right position.

At this moment around here "Ahead Full" means our crew is **simultaneously**: conducting our Spring Lecture Series; nearing completion on the complete overhaul of the Percy & Small Shipyard exhibitions; completing the new gallery addition to our building; constructing the visiting yachtsmen's building; repairing one or more roofs; building new ramps and stairs to one or more of our historic buildings; preparing for Symposium; building a new float; getting the rest of the docks, floats, boats and moorings ready to put overboard; negotiating for our new hospitality services in Long Reach Hall; planning for the CAMM meeting and several other events later in the Summer and Fall; conducting the programs to be attended by thousands of school children before school's out in June; and completing South Bristol's two little skiffs that will be launched into their harbor in a few weeks!

Now, when I arrive each morning or whenever during the day I return to my office, I actually check, as if for reassurance, the position of my little engine order telegraph. It is always at "Ahead Full." I wonder if it will ever seem appropriate to throttle back to a slower speed. Somehow I don't think so. Nor, I would say, do I and my colleagues (symbolic "shipmates") desire it.

Tom

Thomas R. Wilcox, Jr.
Executive Director

The Rhumb Line

Number 30 June 2002

The Rhumb Line is a quarterly newsletter of Maine Maritime Museum, a non-profit institution.

Editor-in-Chief: Thomas R. Wilcox, Jr.

Issue Editor: Linda MacMillan

Contributors: Ellen Conner, Nathan Lipfert, Jason Morin, Will West, Anne Witty

Layout & Printing: Penmor Lithographers

Maine Maritime Museum
243 Washington Street
Bath, ME 04530

(207) 443-1316
FAX 207-443-1665
www.bathmaine.com
e-mail: maritime@bathmaine.com



Refitting The Percy & Small Shipyard *(continued from page 1)*

Shop, and Caulkers' Shed — have been the setting for hundreds of shipyard tours. They have educated tens of thousands of visitors about wooden shipbuilding.

But they have also acquired the patina of age. Exhibit production techniques have changed; so have the expectations of museum visitors. A more current approach to maritime history now includes social history and material culture along with the more traditional focus on technical aspects of shipbuilding, shipping, and sailing.

There is now a great deal more information about shipbuilding here at Percy & Small than we had in 1978. The extensive research that Lin Snow and Doug Lee present in their recent book *A Shipyard in Maine: Percy & Small and the Great Schooners* provides sufficient inspiration for a dozen new exhibits!

The planned shipyard exhibits combine new information about "our shipyard" and its workers with up-to-date exhibit techniques — using color transparencies, large-sized type and oversized photographs, audio effects, and other tricks of the designers' trade. The shipyard exhibits will reach museum visitors with varied interests and learning styles. They are designed to accommodate visitors who show themselves around, as well as those who join guided tours.

The entire story will be introduced in the newly-built McEvoy Gallery, an addition to the Maritime History Building. This space provides a graceful transition to a walk around the shipyard's original older buildings.

As we install these new exhibits, we must inevitably "break some eggs." We're moving out many large objects that have landed in the shipyard buildings over the years. A crack volunteer crew, under the leadership of Registrar Chris Hall, has tackled this painstaking work, shifting such items as marine engines, a huge bank cashier's bench, various extra pieces of machinery, and a boat or two into storage until they are next needed for display.

Removing items that are extraneous to the story of shipbuilding at Percy & Small allows

the site to reflect its own history, and helps reveal the authentic nature of the shipyard buildings. This change is important because what museum exhibits present in words, pictures, and artifacts is only a part of the story. Creating a true impression of the Percy & Small shipyard provides a good atmosphere for showing what went on here. We cannot recreate the working shipyard; its day is past, and most people would not find a tour of Percy & Small ca. 1916 to be pleasant, safe, or instructive. (In fact, a time-traveling tourist would probably be chased away by shipwrights bent on getting the job done!)

But we still have the historic buildings, and they have a lot to show us. Enter the second-floor Joiner Shop on a warm August day, and you immediately learn something about working conditions at an early-twentieth century shipyard. The skylights bring in light, but also brutal heat that accumulates just as it would in any un-insulated attic. On a late afternoon in autumn, a similar lesson comes home: it's chilly, and there's barely enough light to see by despite the electric lights hanging from the beams. A wintertime walk from building to building makes one wonder what it would have been like to work outside all day long with the wind cavorting down the Kennebec.

Drinking in this characteristic shipyard atmosphere while learning about the site's specific history promises a rewarding experience for visitors to the Percy & Small shipyard buildings and exhibits. Plan to join us in early July to visit our new exhibits.

Visit Our New Website !

Look for our new Website at

www.mainemaritimemuseum.org

Please take time to visit the new menu items and options that are designed for easy navigation.

USS Winston S. Churchill Officers & Crew Honored at Long Reach Hall



On Thursday evening, May 9th, the officers and some crew members of the Bath Iron Works built USS *Winston S. Churchill* enjoyed a "Key to the City" reception and dinner in Long Reach Hall.

Over 125 attendees enjoyed meeting and listening to Commander Holly A. Graf, who assumed command of the ship just prior to her arrival in Bath. Cmdr. Graf accepted the key to the city with Petty

Officer First Class Ervin Henley, who is the *Churchill's* sailor of the year.

Tom Wilcox welcomed the *Churchill* crew and other guests with John Brill of The Coastal Journal, Jim Unker of Main Street Bath, and Chet Rice and Rick Snow of the US Navy League - all of whom planned the evening with Mary Jane Dillingham, the Museum's Hospitality Director.

More About Long Reach Hall

Plan a visit to the Museum soon and enjoy the lovely view from our climate-controlled Dining Room or out on the sundeck overlooking the Kennebec River! Coffee and light breakfast snacks are available for Museum visitors daily.

If you are interested in Long Reach Hall rental information for a special event or meeting, please call Mary Jane Dillingham, Hospitality Director at 207-443-1316 x 351. She'll be happy to set up an appointment to see you.



Arriving for dinner at the historic White Horse Tavern - est. 1673 - are participants in the Museum's sponsored Newport, R.I. tour, "Exploring Newport's Maritime Heritage," this past April 17-20. (L-R) Charles & Miriam Butts (Museum members and tour leaders representing Travel Seminars), Anna Spoerri, Bruce Mott, sisters Julie Cerrone & Helena Woodruff, Abbie Mott, Richard Singer (hidden), Margaret Singer, Barbara & Bill Potter, Hiram & Beth Dexter and Sven Spoerri. Missing: Mary & Tom Moser, Chantal & Michael Jennings and Warren Cerrone. A wonderful trip was had by all!

Photo by Warren Cerrone

Corporate Partners Program

Linda MacMillan, Director of Development

We are pleased to report that through our partnership with a number of area businesses, the Museum is able to continue preserving Maine's maritime heritage with additional support from this new program.

Corporate Partners recognizes that Museum support can offer marketing benefits for our business partners, as opposed to a purely philanthropic endeavor. In exchange for critically needed help – either financial or gifts-in-kind – the **Corporate Partners Program** provides a menu of marketing benefits, which represent advantages to both the business and to the Museum.

The trustees, staff and volunteers at Maine Maritime Museum encourage all area busi-

nesses to consider becoming Corporate Partners. Director Tom Wilcox, extension #324 or Development Director, Linda MacMillan, extension #327, will be happy to discuss any questions about this Program. Their email addresses are wilcox@bathmaine.com and macmillan@bathmaine.com.

Our New Corporate Partners include:

Corporate Downeasters -

Bath Iron Works
Bath Savings Institution
The Harraseeket Inn
The Times Record

Corporate Shipwrights -

Baker Newman & Noyes
CHR/GMAC Realty

The Tara Awaits a New Owner

William R. West, Boatshop Manager

The Boatshop has completed a new boat based on *Tara*, a boat from our small craft collection. *Tara* is a small pulling boat of 12 feet, built much like a Whitehall, with tapered frames, hollow bow sections and a very handsome wineglass transom. We took her to the Boatbuilder's Show in Portland in March to begin this year's raffle. She was very well received.

I chose to build this boat not only for her looks but also for the story she shares with us. At a quick glance, *Tara* doesn't look like much sitting in the Boatshop Gallery; she's missing a good deal of her portside planking. But the story is still as good today, as it will be 95 years from now, and as for the missing planks, they don't really affect the way I see the boat. I think it's as hard to describe the wonderment of the sea as it is to explain the beauty of a boat: it is either self-evident, or no amount of explanation will help someone to understand it.

In 1907, a new lighthouse on Isle au Haut was built at Robinson Point. Mr. Holbrook took the position as Lighthouse Keeper and moved his family from Matinicus Island to Isle au Haut. The Holbrooks lit the Robinson Point Light for the first time on Christmas Eve, 1907. Mr. Holbrook turned one of the out-buildings into a shop, and among other projects he built at least one boat for a family on the island, the Joneses.

The family of Dr. Gilbert Norris Jones had a summer home at Moor's Harbor, Isle au Haut, and Doctor Jones bought *Tara* from Mr. Holbrook for his daughter, Margaret. They used the boat there at the summer home, where the children played and fished from *Tara*. The family rigged the boat with a downwind sail, and we even have a photo of Margaret painting *Tara* on the bow for the first time. The boat was eventually passed down to Peggy Dice, the doctor's granddaughter, and in turn she gifted *Tara* to Maine Maritime Museum in 1981.

Please stop by and take a look at the new *Tara* in Sewall Hall and buy a raffle ticket! Come by the Boatshop and see the original *Tara*, in the Boatshop Gallery. With her is our current project – a 10-foot Blaisdell lapstrake tender, originally built in 1934. We measured the boat last year and we'll be building the first one this summer. We're also building two 13-foot stitch and glue sailing peapods. I'll be teaching workshops this summer starting with lofting, surveying, and half modeling check our event calendar for dates. We'll also have a skiff-building course in July. And please stop by our pinky schooner, *Maine*: she'll be at the dock getting some needed upgrades. The Boatshop never sits idle – come and visit with us!

The Summer of '42: How a Destroyer Manned by Green "Citizen Sailors" Became a Combat Legend in the Pacific - Part I

By Richard J. Hall, Jr.*

It was the summer of '42. No, not the movie. This was the real thing – that dark time after Pearl Harbor when an unprepared America scrambled to equip and train fighting forces for a 2-theatre war. The Navy was launching warships as fast as possible, but seasoned sailors to man them were few and far between. That's why green kids right out of school had to grow up in a hurry. Their country needed them to perform at levels above and beyond their maturity and experience.

I was typical. I dropped out of high school and enlisted in the Navy. My dad didn't like the idea, but at least I saved him the anguish of drafting me. He headed the local Selective Service Board.

Boot camp was cut from six weeks to two. I had barely learned how to tie my leggings when I was yanked out and sent to Boston Harbor. There I joined other untried young men aboard a brand new destroyer, the USS *O'Bannon* (DD450). Soon after we left harbor the first time, almost everyone became seasick. And for good reason – 90 percent of the crew had never been to sea.

On August 16, 1942, our shakedown cruise was over and we left home port for the last time. Little did we know what a legendary adventure lay ahead. Who could have predicted the extraordinary feats this "tin can" and its neophyte crew would accomplish?

But there was little time for reflection: our mission was too compelling – to get to the South Pacific as fast as possible. Powerful Japanese forces were overwhelming the area, and there was talk they might invade Australia. That's why the Navy sent everything afloat to the Solomon Islands. No one expected us to stop the enemy. But it was hoped we could at least slow their progress.

As we raced to the Pacific, on-the-job training was top priority. Fortunately, we were blessed with a cadre of superb officers and petty officers. They drilled us day and night, and by the time we arrived at our base in New Caledonia, we were ready and confident.

I was lucky. They assigned me to fire control, atop the ship where I could see the battles unfold. Our team tracked targets, fed data to computers, aimed our 5-inch guns and pulled the triggers. Because the *O'Bannon* was new, it carried the latest fire-control radar, primitive by today's standards but superior to what the Japanese had. That didn't make the enemy less formidable. Not only were they trained to fight at night, but they were expert at scanning a combat arena with powerful searchlights.

We didn't have to wait long to get combat-tested. Word came down that a powerful Japanese task force was heading south to push our marines off Guadalcanal. Like every other battle in those early months of the war, we were outnumbered and out-gunned. They had two battleships, a cruiser and 14 destroyers. We had a few cruisers and eight destroyers. Their crews were seasoned, ours were green. The date was November 13, 1942.

It was a furious engagement. The night was dark and the situation chaotic. At one point, we were following two of our cruisers through a strait leading into open water. As the first cruiser emerged from the strait, all hell broke loose. Japanese searchlights immediately found their target, and a gallant ship was literally blown out of the water. Tragically, our second cruiser moved ahead and met the same fate.

continued on next page



U.S.S. O'Bannon, lying at a mooring on July 13, 1942, about the time Richard J. Hall, Jr., joined her crew. This Fletcher-Class destroyer was built at Bath Iron Works. Laid down on March 3, 1941 (before Pearl Harbor), she was launched March 14, 1942, and delivered to the Navy on June 26, 1942. The Navy commissioned her on June 26 and sent her to join the Pacific battle fleet in August, with a very quickly trained crew. We are happy to present the accompanying memoir by a member of that young crew.

Now it was our turn. It was one of the scariest moments of the war. A warship we could not see obviously had tremendous fire power – and knew how to use it. But we had no choice – we had to move ahead. Then we saw it – the battleship *Hiei* – lurking no more than 300 yards away.

There was no time to pray. Before we knew it, the battleship's 16-inch guns sent a withering salvo at us. But, miraculously, the shells sailed right over us and landed harmlessly in the sea. Then we realized why. The towering battleship couldn't depress its big guns enough to hit our low-slung destroyer.

Immediately sizing up the situation, Captain MacDonald gave the order to hit them with everything we had. And we did. At point blank range, our team raked the *Hiei*'s superstructure with our 5-inch guns.

The results were devastating. We didn't sink the dreadnaught, because of her heavy armor, but we definitely put her out of commission.

The next day our dive bombers finished her off.

But the battle was not over. In fact, we had to deal simultaneously with three separate targets. Despite her damage, the *Hiei* kept firing at us with a few smaller guns she had left. At the same time, we engaged a destroyer and sank it, then took on a cruiser and sent it to the bottom. With all the confusion and darkness, these sinkings were not known for sure until the next day, when they were definitely confirmed.

Meanwhile we high-tailed it out of there, rescuing survivors from sister ships being sunk all around us.

The battle was significant. Not only was the Japanese juggernaut finally slowed, but vital Henderson Field on Guadalcanal was saved from certain destruction. Equally important, the *O'Bannon* and its green crew proved we were up to the job. Our training had paid off. Once we were locked on to a target our concentration was so deep that nothing could distract us.

continued on page 8

The Summer of '42 (Continued from page 7)

This was the first of the *O'Bannon's* five major ship-to-ship engagements – all of them furious, all at night and all too costly, to both navies. The battles took place near Guadalcanal, in waters aptly named “Iron Bottom Sound,” symbolizing the tragic destinies of too many noble ships and gallant crews.

We Grieve at the Loss of USS *Helena*

For the *O'Bannon* crew, the most emotional time in the war was when a vessel we thought of as our “mother” ship, the cruiser *Helena*, was hit with several torpedoes. We were very attached to this proud ship and its crew. I remember when we joined her for a major shore bombardment. We marveled at how her firepower eradicated the enemy installation – like a fire hose washing everything in its way. But now the *Helena* was mortally wounded. We watched hopelessly as her familiar bow, carrying Number 50, disappeared into the sea. There was not a dry eye on the *O'Bannon* deck.

Once back at base, we immediately volunteered to return and search for the *Helena's* survivors. Why was voluntary action needed? Because it was extremely dangerous to place ships within range of shore batteries – while rescuing our buddies. The Navy approved our request and we joined two other destroyers and raced back to the site. Fortunately, we found a number of survivors on the beach, so we sent in rescue forces as our 5-inch guns dueled with Japanese shore batteries. It was touch and go, but we got everyone out and escaped with little damage and minimal casualties.

Over the next year, our duty was intense and exhausting. Sleep was hard to come by. We were constantly returning at night to the “Slot,” a narrow strait above Guadalcanal, to confront superior Japanese fleets – usually attempting to reinforce and resupply their troops. The *O'Bannon* inflicted heavy damage on a wide range of Japanese vessels and aircraft and, miraculously, never got hit, never suffered a casualty. Our sister ships were not so lucky. Many of them never made it.

I've often been asked why the *O'Bannon* sur-

vived its hellish first year – against all odds. Obviously no one knows. But I'm sure I had a guardian angel looking after me. I like to think she was Mary O. Smith, my beloved grandmother and matriarch of our family in New Jersey. I swear she was “flying our fo'c's'le.”

Our last Ship-to-Ship Engagement

The fifth and last of the *O'Bannon's* surface battles climaxed our mission in the Solomons. It was at Vella Lavella island, northwest of Guadalcanal, on October 6, 1943. Unbeknownst to us, a Japanese task force of nine destroyers was headed out way to help evacuate troops from the island.

Three American destroyers were on patrol in the area: the *Selfridge*, the *Chevalier*, and the *O'Bannon*. Our orders were to stop anything that moved into the area.

As we patrolled, we soon picked up radar signals showing enemy destroyers heading in our direction. We had no choice. Despite being heavily outnumbered, we had to engage them. As our radar tracked the narrowing gap between the opposing forces, my sidekick gunner, Janicki, and I wondered: Had our luck finally run out? I remember the incident vividly, because we had both been praying, and when we shook hands – as if to say “goodbye” – our Rosary Beads tangled together.

A moment later, our radar scopes told us now was the time to let loose. And we did. All three destroyers opened fire and launched torpedoes. The first enemy destroyer erupted in flames and two others were seriously hit. But the others retaliated quickly, badly damaging the *Selfridge*, which limped away, and sinking the *Chevalier*. They never hit the *O'Bannon*, but we were following so closely behind the *Chevalier* that when she stalled, we collided with her. The accident tore off part of our bow, but did not affect our ship's seaworthiness.

To make things worse, our radar was now showing another fleet heading our way. Here we were with one destroyer sunk, another

continued on next page

The Summer of '42 *(Continued from page 7)*

barely afloat and our speed cut in half from the collision. We were sitting ducks. It was the scariest experience of my life.

Then, miraculously, the Japanese force turned and ran. We were dumfounded – but soon realized what had happened. The blips we had just seen on the radar were our own reserve fleet coming to help us. Our guardian angel had done it again!

** Richard J. Hall, Jr. served on the O'Bannon for three years and one month. When he was discharged in November, 1945, his rank was Fire Control Petty Officer, Third Class. Today he and his wife, Frances, live in Forked River, N.J. He has four children and nine grandchildren. He is 79.*

This article was prepared in collaboration with Albert Smith, Richard Hall's cousin. Stay tuned for Part II, coming in the next issue.

Remember The Museum With a Deferred Gift

The Museum can benefit from several deferred gift arrangements including Pooled Income Funds; Gift Annuities; Charitable Remainder Trusts and gifts of Real Estate.

For detailed information about these types of investments, please contact us at 207-443-1316.

Our Wish List

BobCat AWS (ALL Wheel Steer) Loader with Bob-Tach quick change attachment system, bucket and pallet forks.

Please call us at 207-443-1316 x 321 if you can help with this. Thank you!

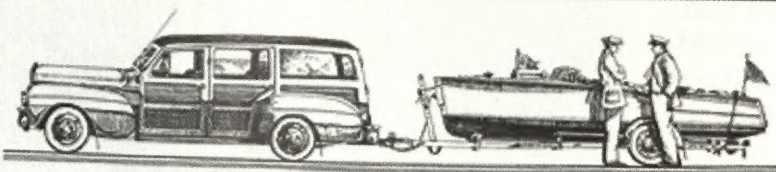
Thank you to John Hilpman and Bob Trabona for the 10" table saws!

Summer 2002 Boatshop Workshop

Members receive a 10% discount!

Skiff Building July 8 – 11 & 15 – 18
(Mon. thru Thurs.) 9:00 AM – 4:00 PM

Build a Kennebec skiff of the Museum's own design! The class will work through lofting and setup phases, build the boat, and caulk the seams. A hands-on, 8-day course. Open to teens, ages 14 & up accompanied by a participating adult. Limited to 6; tuition is \$285.



MAINE MARITIME MUSEUM
CLASSIC BOAT and ANTIQUE ENGINE RENDEZVOUS
SEPTEMBER 21, 2002 ~ 9:30 am - 5:00 pm

Dock and mooring space is very limited—

Register early to reserve space!

207-443-1316 ext.0

All events take place at
Maine Maritime Museum
243 Washington Street
Bath, Maine 04530

Welcome to Our Museum Store Manager!

Formerly from New York City, Rea Turet most recently worked at the DeLorme Map Store and the Maine Historical Society in Portland. Previously, she worked in New York as a commercial insurance underwriter for Royal Insurance, a department manager for Abraham & Straus Department store, a copywriter for J.C. Penney and McCann-Erickson advertising agency, and a secretary at NBC.

Rea has an M.A. in American and New England Studies from University of Southern Maine and an M.B.A. from Baruch College in Manhattan. She has a B.S. from Syracuse University.

Rea and her husband, Sandor M. Polster, live in Durham with their black lab, Charley, and cat Kitty. Their daughter, Rebekah, has returned to New York and is in publishing.



In the few weeks since she's been on board, Rea has done some very nice redesign of the Museum Store displays and floor plan. Stop in and see the new look soon and meet Rea!

The Volunteer Program Springs Forward

Ellen Conner, Volunteer Coordinator

Many thanks to all who helped out at the 2002 Maine Boatbuilders Show! The months of April and May have seen staff and volunteers busily planning and training for the upcoming summer months. Volunteer opportunities still available include deck maintenance on the pinky schooner Maine, presenting demos, and working in the Museum Store - all fun ways to spend a Maine summer day! Of course, it's not all work for Maine Maritime Museum volunteers! In June, we'll celebrate the return of warm weather (as well as our snow-birds) with a Tea Party, and in July we'll take our annual boat trip to Five Islands. Your continued support of the Volunteer Program is much appreciated - since December, we've recruited and trained 21 new volunteers! For more information about the Museum's Volunteer Program, please contact Ellen at 443-1316 ext. 350 or by email at conner@bathmaine.com.

WELCOME ABOARD!

New Members

February 2002 - April 2002

Tom Chapman
Moriah Doak and Kevin Tyrrell
Joseph R. Garvey
Stuart B. Goldman
Mr. and Mrs. William S. Hart
James S. Henderson
Joyce Dare Johnstone
David R. MacLean
John and Tracy Mayo-Smith
Cory M. McCoy
William E. Nyberg
Christina Oddleifson
Matthew Pouliot
Todd Richardson
Richard S. Robinson
Mr. and Mrs. Richard Speer
Ellie Stein-Cowan

Student Boat Builders Launch 7th Fleet

Jason Morin, Education Coordinator

The South Bristol eighth grade class of nine students is anxiously waiting for June 14th. No, it's not the last day of school they are so eager for, it's the day they will launch the two skiffs they have built as part of the Discovery Boat Building Program at Maine Maritime Museum. Every year one hundred or so spectators show up at the Bittersweet Boat Landing in South Bristol to witness the launching of the boats and to applaud the 8th graders' accomplishments. In this unique program the students learn so much more than just how to build boats.

Beginning in September students are bussed each Friday to the Museum to take part in the program. They begin by learning the basics such as shop safety and how to use the tools of the craft to make various types of joints then they move on to making toolboxes, and before Christmas break they make half-models from plans of the boat they are to build.

This year's class built two eleven foot Susan Skiffs designed by R.M. Steward. Beginning in February, the students used their math skills as they learned about lofting first-hand. Students spent two Fridays lofting the boats. Once the lofting was completed they began to work on building the boats, first building the body molds and jig using measurements taken from their lofting. They then practiced the art of steam bending as they worked their oak chine logs to the body molds.

As students clench nailed the lap-strake planks together, the boats began to take shape. From reading the journals the students were required to keep, one could feel the excitement level and sense of pride as it began to bubble out.

The program now in its seventh year gives the students an opportunity like no other. Students apply what they have learned in the classroom to something that they care about and it gives them real world experiences. Not everything works the way they expect it to, and it is up to the students to use their problem-solving skills to figure out how to make things work. In the academic portion of the class, students are required to keep journals detailing their work for that day. They receive weekly questions, which reflect on safety, history, and what they have accomplished. They learn everything from wood properties and maritime history to how to work as a team to accomplish a common goal, all in a hands-on interactive manner that carries on our maritime heritage.

One of this year's students, Dylan Mitchell, comments, "The program has made me more responsible and more careful of how I do things. I look at things from a different view, as an eagle not a mouse. I look at challenges and say that they are not challenges they are little bumps in the road. Maine Maritime Museum has helped me conquer my fears of large power tools. Thank you MMM."



Don't Let Us Sail Without You
Support MMM by Becoming a Member

Individual	\$30-59
Family	\$60-124
Sustaining	\$125-249
Patron	\$250-499
Shipwright	\$500-999
Downeaster	\$1000+

Please send us your check or call our Membership Office at 207-443-1316 ext 334

*Watch for your Invitation to
Our Annual Gala*

"Ports of Call"
Featuring Italian Ports

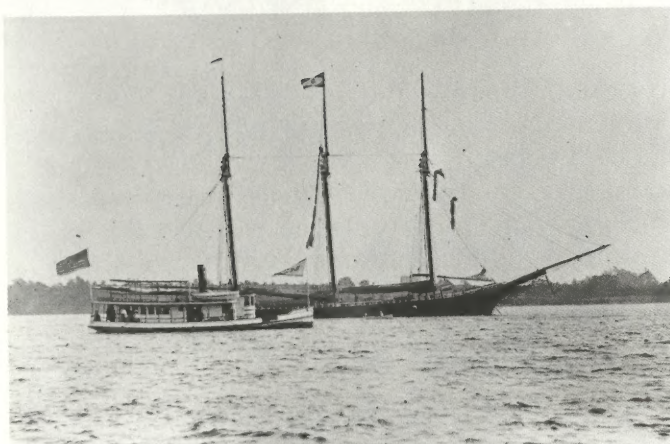
Music, Dancing, Live Auction & Cash Bar

Thursday, July 11th 6:30-9:30 p.m.

Donnell House Maine Maritime Museum

Puzzler From The Library

A New Puzzler: Perhaps this will be an easier one. The names of the steamer and the three-mast schooner are unknown, but the schooner is flying what looks like the Gardiner G. Deering house flag. The name on the burgee at the steamer's bow seems to start with an E. On the back of the print is written "A-C-E plate 12/18/48," in handwriting resembling that on pictures from the Frank Claes collection. Clearly, the picture was taken long before 1948. Mysteriously, there is no accession number or other indication of how the picture got into the Museum's collection. What do you think? Is this the Kennebec River? What vessels are these?



Last Issue's Puzzler:

We received no responses regarding the identification of the tern schooner being towed with her centerboard hanging on her side. Our batting average is not too good, lately!

MAINE
MARITIME
MUSEUM



243 Washington Street, Bath, Maine 04530

Nonprofit Org.
U.S. Postage
PAID
Bath, ME 04530
Permit No. 10